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RUEHKSO/AMCONSUL SAPPORO PRIORITY 8290
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C O N F I D E N T I A L SECTION 01 OF 05 TOKYO 001263

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CU, CH, IR, PK, JA

SUBJECT: DEPUTY SECRETARY'S MEETING WITH JAPANESE VFM
YABUNAKA FOCUSES ON CHINA, BURMA, IRAN AND TIP

Classified By: Charge d'Affaires Joe Donovan for reasons 1.4(b) and (d)

11. (C) SUMMARY: Japanese Vice Foreign Minister Yabunaka, at dinner with Deputy Secretary May 8, said Chinese President Hu's visit to Japan was focused on the future of the relationship and that the Chinese had avoided comments about difficult historical issues. Yabunaka expressed strong dissatisfaction with Japan's Tier II ranking in the Department's TIP report, requested senior-level participation at Japan's upcoming Africa development conference and said Japan planned to increase aid to Burma in the wake of the disaster there. The Deputy Secretary called to Yabunaka's attention Cuba Solidarity Day and asked Japan to signal support for human rights and democracy promotion in Cuba. The two also discussed the Hague Convention on Child Abductions, Afghanistan, and Iran. END SUMMARY.

CHINA-JAPAN SUMMIT

12. (C) VFM Yabunaka reported that the ongoing visit of Chinese President Hu Jintao to Tokyo has been going well. Although no progress was made on the three substantive issues that have been receiving the most attention in the press (Tibet, tainted dumplings, and oil and gas exploration in the East China Sea), the atmospherics have been very good. Hu, he reported, had mentioned nothing of the past, choosing instead to focus on the future relationship which China wishes to base on "mutually beneficial strategic relations" and by which they will seek to promote "universally recognized common values." Yabunaka said that this last phrase is really understood to mean "human rights" although it wasn't possible to say so directly, and that China and Japan plan to resume their human rights dialogue -- last held in 2000 -- later this month. He referred to the joint statement signed by Hu and Prime Minister Fukuda as the "fourth fundamental document" concerning the China-Japan relationship since 1972 setting out the relationship between

the two countries and noted that it is the first one that does not mention historical issues or the past. Yabunaka expects that the agreement will result in more high-level and working-level exchanges, as well as military-to-military exchanges. It was agreed that a Japanese Maritime Self Defense Force vessel will make a port call in China prior to the Olympic Games. He said the Japanese found the Chinese to be quite nervous about the Olympics and the economy. China also wanted to demonstrate to its own people the importance of progress in the China-Japan relationship.

13. (C) With regard to the three big public issues, Yabunaka reported the following:

-- Tibet. Prime Minister Fukuda told Hu that China must have a dialogue with Tibet. Hu replied that talks with representatives of the Dalai Lama will continue even though they are "complicated" and the representatives are frustrating to deal with. Yabunaka reported the Chinese were very upset with the French for the way the Olympic torch relay was conducted in France, but indicated just before the torch reached Nagano on April 26 that only Japan and the United States really understood China's concerns about the torch. The Japanese took this as a positive signal that Hu's subsequent meetings in Tokyo would be conducted in a positive atmosphere.

-- Tainted dumplings. No progress was made to resolve the ongoing dispute growing from the case of the poisoned Chinese dumplings which had made their way into the Japanese market.

TOKYO 00001263 002 OF 005

Yabunaka said the Chinese fail to see this as a big deal "since no one died" and are having a difficult time appreciating Japanese concerns about food safety. They consider the whole thing to be a media campaign aimed at damaging relations with China. Yabunaka said attempts were made to explain that the Japanese obsession with food safety is not aimed only at China, but at everyone else as well, including the United States and even domestic Japanese producers and restaurants. Yabunaka acknowledged that the food processing plant in question was very clean and modern, but seemed to dismiss the Chinese conclusion that the poisonous substance involved must have been placed on the outside of the package downstream in the shipping process. Talks on this continue at the working level.

-- East China Sea. Yabunaka said the press is reporting a major breakthrough, but in fact the situation is really not much changed and talks are continuing at the working level. He said that there would be no concrete breakthrough until at least after the G-8 meetings.

14. (C) The Japanese were also pleased by what they viewed as progress with the Chinese on climate change issues. Yabunaka reported that although there was no breakthrough, the Chinese at least acknowledged they value Japan's strategy to approach this problem on a sectoral basis, and also agreed to cooperate on a post-Kyoto framework.

15. (C) With regard to Japan's bid to win a permanent seat on the Security Council, the Japanese goal with this visit was to make sure the Chinese did not come out clearly against this possibility. Accordingly, said Yabunaka, the Japanese were satisfied by the signing of a side document to the joint declaration -- very rare for President Hu to do, he claimed -- in which China "appreciates" the role Japan has played at the United Nations and expressing the hope that Japan will continue to play even a greater and more constructive role in the future. According to Yabunaka, the Chinese acknowledged with a wink "we both know what we are talking about, but this is all we can say at this time."

16. (C) On civil nuclear cooperation, Yabunaka told the Deputy Secretary that Tokyo and Beijing have also agreed upon a way forward in the field of civil nuclear cooperation, but that

this agreement was not being publicized. He said that there is an existing agreement regarding the end use of Japanese exports to China's nuclear industry, but that it had not been adequately enforced in the past. It was agreed at the summit that steps will be taken by China to solidify and enforce the agreement, which will then allow Japanese companies to more easily export nuclear technology to China. He added that this step is also a positive one for the United States, noting an agreement between Westinghouse and Toshiba to bid on Chinese nuclear projects.

17. (C) Yabunaka said the Japanese also pushed China to increase military transparency and noted that the Chinese seemed more relaxed about the situation with Taiwan, as they did not push hard on this issue. Yabunaka summed up by saying that, all told, the Japanese were pleased with the visit.

JAPAN UNHAPPY WITH TIP REPORT

18. (C) Yabunaka mentioned that Tokyo was very unhappy last year with the Department's Trafficking in Persons report and said many people in the government had worked very hard to

TOKYO 00001263 003 OF 005

respond to U.S. concerns. The strong hope is that when this year's report comes out, Japan will no longer be a Tier II country "like Rwanda" but will be elevated to the same status as other countries such as Canada and South Korea. Yabunaka said his own attitude toward this was that Japan should forget about the report. "We know what we are doing and we can be proud of ourselves. We do not need to care what others think about us." But, he said, other "more serious" people in the government and in the Diet disagree and are upset, so he is hopeful that the hard work being done will be recognized by the Department.

HAGUE CONVENTION ON CHILD ABDUCTION

19. (C) Japan is taking steps to move toward joining the Hague Convention on the Civil Aspects of International Parental Child Abduction, Yabunaka reported. He acknowledged that this is likely to take a long time, but said that in the meantime Japan is willing to address cases on a case-by-case basis, strongly recognizing the humanitarian aspects posed by this issue. He said Japan has also been in contact with Canada about this and has produced a manual to be used by Japanese consular officials to guide them in the handling of these types of cases. The Deputy Secretary responded that this is welcome news, noting that there are currently 47 cases involving 60 children who have been separated from their parents in the United States. (NOTE: Embassy Tokyo observes that the manual does not change the fundamental issue that, in Japan, the taking parent has sole discretion as to whom can visit the child, including the left-behind U.S. parent and consular officers in Japan. END NOTE.)

BURMA DISASTER RELIEF

10. (C) Japan immediately made assistance available to Burma in the wake of the recent cyclone, said Yabunaka, drawing from warehoused supplies, such as tents and generators, which Japan stores in Singapore. These supplies had reached Burma via commercial flights from Singapore. Due to the rapidly rising casualty figures which are only now becoming available, Yabunaka said the Cabinet would be meeting to allocate additional emergency relief funds. (NOTE: The next day, May 9, the Japanese cabinet approved the allocation of an addition USD 10 million to be granted through international organizations. END NOTE.) Yabunaka said Tokyo

has been in touch with the Burmese regime to urge it to grant access to relief organizations and other countries which are ready and able to assist, and which have much experience dealing with this type of situation.

AFGHANISTAN - PAKISTAN

¶11. (C) Yabunaka reported briefly on the recent visit by Foreign Minister Koumura to Afghanistan and Pakistan, highlighting the fact that Japan has recently decided to double its aid to Pakistan to over USD 400 million in yen loans. He said Japan will keep pressing Islamabad to make progress on the path to democracy. In addition, he mentioned Japan's contributions toward developing the Federally Administered Tribal Areas, which Japan considers very important. He lamented the fact that moving forward with planned projects there has not been easy.

TOKYO 00001263 004 OF 005

¶12. (C) In Kabul, Koumura met with President Karzai and assured him Japan is prepared to do its share at the upcoming Afghanistan Support Conference in Paris next month. Yabunaka believes a senior level government official will participate in that meeting. In addition, he noted that a new Japanese-financed terminal will be opened later this month at Kabul's airport, and a senior official will travel there to attend the inaugural ceremony. Yabunaka said that Japan is taking very seriously the situation in Afghanistan, not only from a bilateral aspect but also from the role it is playing as chair of the G-8 this year.

IRAN

¶13. (C) Yabunaka mentioned that earlier in the day the Iranian Ambassador had come to meet with him to announce that Tehran is in the process of considering a "new and bold" approach to the nuclear impasse, and that they were currently consulting with Moscow on this. The Ambassador promised to reveal more details when they were finally worked out. (NOTE: In an interview he gave to the press reported the same day, the Iranian Ambassador said that his government would be sending an envoy to Tokyo later in the month to discuss this proposal with Japan, acting in its capacity as chair of the G-8. END NOTE.) Yabunaka said he had reiterated to the Ambassador Japan's firmly held view that Iran must comply with the Security Council resolutions and cease its enrichment activities. The Deputy Secretary warned that the announcement of "new" proposals by the Iranians is nothing new, and any such proposal should be regarded with a healthy dose of skepticism.

AFRICA

¶14. (C) Yokohama will be the venue later this month for the fourth meeting of the Tokyo International Conference on African Development (TICAD IV), reminded Yabunaka. He wanted to emphasize to the Deputy Secretary that Japan is serious about playing a role in assisting African nations and is proud of the fact that 44 heads of state are expected to attend the meeting. He said it is doubtful that Zimbabwean President Robert Mugabe will attend, given the current electoral controversies he is facing. The Deputy Secretary replied that it is a little heralded fact that the U.S. is also very committed to Africa.

CUBA

¶15. (C) The Deputy Secretary informed Yabunaka that May 20 is the anniversary of Cuban independence, and that President Bush will be making a speech on May 21 about Cuba, the theme being to keep hope for freedom alive. He said we would like very much for Japan to at least issue a statement to show its interest in promoting democracy and human rights in Cuba to correspond with the President's speech. It will go a long way, he said, if a number of respected, like-minded countries were to speak out together on this important issue. He said the Embassy would follow up on this request, and Yabunaka replied that he would consider Japan's course of action.

ENHANCED CONSULTATIONS

TOKYO 00001263 005 OF 005

¶16. (C) VFM Yabunaka concluded the meeting by noting that the U.S. and Japan are natural allies, and made a request to have closer consultations on regional issues at the directors level. He mentioned the recent visit to Washington by MOFA's Iran experts as an example and cited an interest in conducting similar consultations on China, Southeast Asia, South Asia, Central Asia, Russia, and Africa. Policy Planning Director Kanehara added that MOFA would like to expand its regular contacts with the Department from the Policy Planning realm to also include regional directors. The Deputy Secretary said he would be happy to consider a proposal to do so and encouraged Yabunaka to send a note setting forth in detail what he had in mind.

PARTICIPANTS

¶17. (SBU) U.S. delegation:

- Deputy Secretary of State John D. Negroponte
- U.S. Embassy Charge d'Affaires Joe Donovan
- Deputy Assistant Secretary of State Alex Arvizu
- Deputy Assistant Secretary of Defense David Sedney
- D Staff Special Assistant Kaye Lee
- D Staff Special Assistant Ted Wittenstein
- U.S. Embassy Political Officer Evan Reade (notetaker)

¶18. (SBU) Japanese delegation:

- Vice Foreign Minister Mitoji Yabunaka
- Director General North American Affairs Shinichi Nishimiya
- Director of Policy Coordination Nobukatsu Kanehara
- Director 1st N. American Affairs Div. Kanji Yamanouchi
- Director Japan-U.S. Security Treaty Div. Kazuhiro Suzuki
- Director Northeast Asia Div. Shigeo Yamada
- Dep. Dir. 1st N. American Affairs Div. Tada (notetaker)

¶19. (SBU) The Deputy Secretary's party has cleared this cable.
DONOVAN